

AST Business Options

Changing Dynamics in Small Business

The small business environment has changed in recent years due to several factors:

- The explosion in the use of the Internet for communications, data retrieval, research and marketing.
- Increased competition.
- The adoption of modern personal computer technologies.
- The need to improve processes and information flow to be more productive, efficient and profitable.

Small businesses need to be more efficient, communicate better be faster and more customer-oriented. Some have turned to networking and the Internet for help. Limited budgets, personnel and technical expertise, however, challenge others.

Network Appliances

Network appliances are designed to provide networking benefits and help businesses overcome the implementation challenges that too often delay the adoption of new technology. Like their household namesakes, they do a single job very well, are inexpensive and are easy to operate. Network appliances have unique features and benefits that set them apart from traditional solutions:

- Single Function — Appliances do one thing very well. They can quickly and easily enable printer sharing, Internet access, file sharing, etc.
- Simplicity — Appliances deliver services through plug-and-play products that can be set up in minutes.
- Browser-Based Management — Appliances can be installed and maintained from any browser and any PC.
- Enhanced Operating System And Hardware — Because the appliance focuses on a single task, its operating system and hardware are simplified, making it easy to use and reliable.
- Low Cost — Appliances are typically offered at relatively low purchase prices and, because of their simplicity, deliver a very low cost of ownership.

Internet Appliances

AST® offers appliances that can let small businesses reap the benefits of the Internet in a cost-effective way.

- Cobalt Networks' Qube2 is an elegant, compact, easy to use, yet very powerful network appliance that offers to businesses Internet access, intranet and file sharing services.

The Intel® InBusiness™ Internet Station provides small offices with a cost-effective way to share Internet access between many users.